

Revised guidelines for assistance to NGOs

3050. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that her Ministry has issued revised guidelines for assisting Non- governmental Organisations;
- (b) if so, the details of the revised terms and conditions; and
- (c) how far these guidelines act to promote the sustainable programmes meant for the upliftment of targeted people in backward, drought-prone and desertified areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The salient features of the guidelines are :

- (i) To support projects run by good NGOs working in unserved areas, and to widen intervention in the social sector with a view to bring about a healthy sectoral growth in areas where little or no attention has been focused so far.
- (ii) To ensure that the spread of assistance is equitably meted out and, keeping in view the scarce resources available, encourage the voluntary organizations to mobilize their own financial support systems to sustain their activities so that voluntary organizations do not solely rely on aid from the government. This will help in ensuring that the limited resources available with government are utilized judiciously and as a mean of supplementing and not completely funding the voluntary efforts.
- (iii) The Voluntary Organizations should therefore not only be able to sustain their activity financially but also be able to involve all resources available to them, including community support.
- (iv) In acknowledgement of the need to build up a data base on voluntary activity, the guidelines spell out the Ministry's intent to maintain an exclusive data base on Voluntary Organisations which would serve as valuable information regarding their capacity, reach, area of expertise and involvement as well as their strengths and capacity.
- (v) The mechanism of monitoring and evaluating the performance of the Voluntary Organization is sought to be further strengthened and fine tuned.

- (vi) In order to ensure transparency, the elected representatives and local authorities will be given lists of Voluntary Organizations being financially assisted in their areas.
- (vii) Efforts will be made to promote the involvement of qualified and committed volunteers who are also professional in their approach.
- (viii) There shall be time bound release of fund and the processing of cases will be streamlined in a manner that will reduce unnecessary delay in disposal.

(c) It is the responsibility of the Ministry to reach the target group which includes the Scheduled Castes, Minorities, Backward Classes, Disabled, Aged Persons, Street children and victims of Drug Abuse. The objective is to bring them into the mainstream of development by assisting them to overcome their social, physical and educational handicaps. The guidelines promote and encourage the horizontal spread of development alongside sectoral growth in spheres that have received comparatively less attention or may need more attention. New projects shall be approved in respect of those voluntary organizations which locate these in backward and rural areas which are not benefiting from voluntary action at present. New projects will therefore be favoured in rural areas, urban areas in cases of extreme need and in States where voluntary action has so far not been significant. The areas which are prone to backwardness and natural calamities will automatically be covered as new projects in such areas will be given priority whenever a sustainable proposal is received.

Backlog in appointment of handicapped persons in Government offices

3051. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for huge backlog in appointment of Handicapped persons in the State and Central Government offices; and

(b) the steps being taken to make them socially and economically independent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) Various steps have been initiated at the Central and State level to fill up the backlog vacancies, such as, identification of posts, launching of special recruitment drives and lifting of ban on filling up vacancies insofar as the